

Within

Written by Evan Kimball Plochmann

“*Within* is a short film that tells a parable about how fragile the concept of ourselves as a human is; when Ming is injured in an explosion, he discovers that he is a robot, and this drives him into a madness that questions whether his newlywed wife is one too.”

Genre: Science Fiction/Horror Drama

Running Time: 10 minutes

Target Audience: International film festivals, arthouse cinema, and Vimeo/Youku distribution.

Synopsis

Part 1: The film begins in the middle of an argument, Yao Nan, who is pregnant, is going to work on New Year's break and Ming disapproves. She leaves anyway, and Ming is left alone. While doing dishes, the propane heater in their kitchen explodes, injuring his face. He sees that underneath his skin he isn't human, but a robot.

Part 2: When Yao Nan comes back from work, Ming hides from her. Ming finally comes out in a hysteria, and eventually turns on her with a knife, questioning what's under her skin. Their struggle ends with Yao Nan's deadly fall down a flight of stairs. Ming goes to her body and searches for proof that she is a robot as well.

Characters

Ming: The perfect Chinese gentleman: handsome, romantic, and rich. He is a newlywed with Yao Nan, they are a perfect, movie-star couple. He wants to be the man in charge with the perfect wife, but his new wife has a strong independent character that he doesn't appreciate. Ming is the type who has always been given whatever he wanted, he's never struggled hard to make it on his own and therefore lacks a strong personality. When he finds out he isn't a human, his whole world shifts on a fundamental level. Since he is the everyman, he concludes that if he is not human, then others must not be too.

Yao Nan: Ming's new wife, she is 4 months pregnant. She is in her early 30s, beautiful, and very professional. Despite having what some may call a perfect husband, she isn't satisfied with being a stay-at-home wife or future mother, and she sees herself as an equal, despite Ming's disapproval. She is Ming's opposite, working and using her beauty to get what she needs from the world and she is proud of it.

Style

Within is a dark thriller that will utilize high-contrast lighting, engaging acting, and a moody sound mix to carry a heavy emotional tone to its audience.

The final edit will start with long takes that build up into a faster montage for the final minutes of intensity.

The narrative style will be rational, the order of events will be clear and chronological, as opposed to a subjective retelling of events. This format will lend itself to a sense of reality or journalistic telling of the fantasy-horror event.

The visual style of *Within* will be in opposition to its narrative style. The imagery will be done expressionistically in order to reflect a deeper meaning attributed to the world the characters live in, but not to the characters specifically.

Within draws inspiration from two famous noir films: The first is Jean Cocteau's classic *La Belle et la Bête* (1946); which uses high contrast lighting, moody atmosphere, and theatric performances to create a dark, fairytale mood. The second film is Martin Scorsese's *Bringing out the Dead* (1999); this neo-noir uses expressionistic cinematography to characterize the lead roles chaotic world, but not necessarily the internal world of that character. These films both rely on a minimal color palette and stark lighting to create their mood (Ex. 1 & 2).



Ex. 1



Ex. 2

Within will be shot in cinemascope, the same format as *Bringing out the Dead*, (Ex.2). This will give the film a more cinematic presence than competitive short films.

The film will rely on music in the transition from part 1 to part 2, as background to the horror scenes, and during end credits. Inspiration for a choice of composer comes from post classical artists such as Phillip Glass's *Songs and Poems for Cello* and Post-Rock such as God Speed! You Black Emperor's albums *Yanqui U.X.O.*

The film composer [Lauren Buchter](#) has been chosen as a primary candidate, she specializes in cello and piano for film and is a Graduate of Film Scoring program at Berklee College of Music, and in 2014 she was named ASCAP's "Composer to Watch."

Sound effects will be done using what is called *intimate* recording method; this is

a method where the recording artist uses a highly turned up pre-amp to get hyper real sound, and the noise floor along with room tone is left in the recording. Justin Pearson's (Ex. 3) work on Pixar animations, or Nils Frahm's (Ex. 4) work on the album spaces are both good examples of this method.

[Ex. 3](#) [Ex. 4](#)

Why will this film be successful?

Feature *Where Emperors Go to Die*

I think the strongest selling point of this film is that it is a part of a feature film, *Where Emperors Go to Die*, that will be produced later on. The fact is, shorts don't sell but features do. The subject matter of this film is an abridged version of what is to come, and there is a lot of content shoved into this 8 minute short. For example, the feature will expand on the Science Fiction elements, the complexity of Ming's relationship with Yao Nan, and expand on the parable of Qi Ji, Ming's last wife. *Within* gives us a glimpse into the madness we might experience if we found out that we weren't human; *Where Emperors Go to Die* deals with bigger topics such as what it means to be born into success, what flaws affluent people intrinsically have, how lacking a strong spiritual base makes us easily corruptible, and how fragile our relationships can truly be when they can't give us what we want.

As a short film, *Within* will do well in the film festival circuit because the amount of independently produced Asian short films with Science Fiction themes are practically non-existent at film festivals, and there is fierce competition to include unique, new frontier films each year. Film festivals only succeed if their content is fresh, and *Within* is not like anything seen before. The United States specifically nourishes horror films and has a huge variety of horror film festivals with producers scouting for the next big horror film director, and many eyes are looking especially at China.

Markets and Genre Bases

This film has potential to take a strong position in both Chinese and foreign markets.

In China, we see a huge growth in both the horror and Science Fiction film genres. In the past, both horror and Science Fiction were almost non-existent. The effect of both the Communist party's stance towards such genres and cultural interest being too low, gave these genres a very limited environment to grow in. Now, with the strong influence of Western cinema, both horror and Science Fiction are starting a sharp rise in popularity and Chinese audiences desire local productions of these kinds.

Horror is especially popular with young, female audiences and since *Within* has a horror film mood, it has great potential with this market. Recently, *The Zodiac Mysteries* (2012), *Who in the Mirror* (2012), and *Under the Bed* (2016) which grossed 6 million RMB in China.

Science Fiction, on the other-hand is appreciated by many ages and both

genders, so it can reach out to an even larger audience. Both *Within* and *Where Emperors Go to Die* stand out from other Chinese Science Fiction productions in their use of the Science Fiction elements. In China, many films use light Science Fiction, these are films that give technology a minor, supplemental role or use technology as something understood superficially, in such a way that it is more attune to magic. For example the use of apps to help characters with life decisions, or fantasy consumer products used to idealize a perfect, future world. Science Fiction recently has been relegated to comedies and Fantasy films, such as *Bad Sister* (2013), *Impossible* by Sun Zhou (2015), and *Lost in the Pacific* (2016). These are misattributions of Science Fiction; none of these are the same tone of *Within* and *Where Emperors Go to Die* which both rely on deeper Science Fiction.

Deep Science Fiction takes the images of technology as symbols from which we can reflect and learn about our own culture and humanity. This film fits the post-human sub-genre of hard Science Fiction, it calls into question what it means to be human in our contemporary society where the influence of technology and the pressure of civilization rapidly redefines our concept of self.

Since China has avoided deeper Science Fiction productions, it begs the question of whether or not it can sell in China, for this we have to turn to market research and academic articles that also ask this question in a later section.

Within is directed by Evan Kimball Plochmann, an American filmmaker. It helps that a Western director is working in China and applying the already proven Science Fiction tropes and techniques to Chinese Culture. This cross cultural exchange brings a new perspective to both the Western tradition and Chinese film community and it falls into the new film industry envisioned by both Hollywood and China, an international film industry with global sales and culture.

As for Western audiences, there are not a lot of Chinese films that sell in this market. There are two main markets to think about; U.S. Mainstream and European arthouse. Mainstream U.S. Film market is constantly in flux, so it can be hard to pinpoint what will be popular; however, since Chinese culture and asian Science Fiction would be novelties, there is potential for a limited run release at select theaters. It's possible to position this film in the same way *Pan's Labyrinth* was in 2006.

European arthouse on the other hand is a strong and consistent market, although not as large, it is readily available and open to foreign films that have mature content, and as such *Where Emperors Go to Die* is positioned very nicely for this market.

Research on the potential of Science Fiction on the Chinese Market

Some research has been done into the potential of this film in the Chinese market. A rough draft of the script was sent to Wu Yan and Zhang Zhilu, both notable in the film and literature scene; and because of their direct feedback, a large rewrite was done on the script to better portray Chinese culture and focus further on the fantasy, Science Fiction elements. Wu Yan, professor at Beijing Normal University, is directly involved with this project and his company partially represents interests of it's sale and development. He believes, that Science Fiction is the next big film and literature movement in China and novels such as *The Three Body Problem* (2008) are

heralds of this upcoming movement. It is simply the Chinese mentality that needs to familiarize itself with the genre before great Science Fiction films will be made in this country.

Crew Bios

Evan Kimball Plochmann



Plochmann personifies the new age of filmmaking, where filmmakers control the whole creative process; from writing, to mastering the techniques required to make and sell an independent film. He has written and directed over 5 short films, his most recent one, **I am Nowhere**, was officially selected by the Trinity International Film Festival and the International Film Festival of Cinematic Arts. He has also been a key part of many other awarded productions, including Director of Photography for **Farm**, an internationally distributed horror feature, and Assistant Director of the ICFF awarded children's short, **Blue Bike**.

Plochmann also has extensive experience with corporate clients, working in advertising and photography. In America, he ran Production 1, a videography and commercial production company that has been operating for 6 years. Upon arriving in Beijing, not only did he work as a freelance DP on short films, he also expanded his business experience by working with Linksus as a promotional writer, the main client being Chang'an Ford; and doing freelance commercial work with big clients such as Huawei, Dentsu, Microsoft, and SAS.

Currently, he teaches at the world renowned Beijing Film Academy, and the Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication. He is also focused on the writing of two feature films. During the first part of this year he will push a short Science Fiction film he wrote into production.

Directing/Photography:	
I am Nowhere (2015)	Writer/Director/DP
Change of Fortune (2013)	Director of Photography
Blank Fortune (2012)	Director of Photography
Blu Bike (2009)	Assistant Director
Farm (2009)	Director of Photography
Nora's Fish	Principal Photographer
Writing:	
Where Emperor's Go to Die	Feature Film
Apocalypse	Short Film
The Mistake	Short Story

E-mail: kimballewan@gmail.com

Phone: 130-1103-1080

IMDB: www.imdb.com/name/nm3950129/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1

Website: www.production1studio.com/evan-kimball/

Zhang Lingke (Kurt)



摄影师 张麟科 个人简历

1996--1998 成都广播影视艺术技术学院(峨嵋电影制片厂联办) 影视摄影专业

1998--2007 纪录片 广告 宣传片拍摄

2007--2008 北京电影学院摄影系 电影故事片摄影

2009--今 商业拍摄

2013--2015 拍摄项目:(摄影师)

IVECO 红岩重卡广告

西部航空公司广告片

28 阙别墅群广告片

中国思行科技公司广告片

工商银行广告

中海地产广告片

农商行广告片

嘉裕影城广告片

心景温泉酒店广告片

来点视频盒子广告片

重庆卫视系列广告宣传片

宣传片 微电影 MV 电影电视剧《致命回旋》(导演:曹玉屏 摄影指导 方俊甯);《父亲的身份》(导演:高群书 摄影指导 刘寅) 情迷午夜(导演:赵明) 美好重逢(导演:赵明)等

小样: http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTQOMjU4ODU1Mg==.html?sharefrom=iphone&from=singlemessage

Zhao Shan Shan (Twinkle)

赵闪闪 1980 年 1 月出生。户籍所在地：北京。求职意向：北京电影学院美术学院电影视觉艺术设计教师。教育背景:2002 年本科毕业于湖北美术学院设计系视觉传达专业。2012 年研究生毕业于北京电影学院美术系广播电视艺术学专业电视特技创作及理论方向。工作经历:2015 年 10 月至今:北京电影学院影视技术系中国电影高新技术研究院。2014 年至 2015 年北京铎力文化传播有限公司。2012 年至 2014 年北京水晶石教育学院。2006 至 2008 年北京泽图数字科技有限公司。2003 年至 2004 年北京水晶石数字科技有限公司。2002 年至 2003 年中国电影集团华龙电影数字制作有限公司。创作及制作经历: 2016 年柏林电影节延展单元-展映部分艺术家刘窗作品《抑花一号》主创。2015 年北京印刷学院宣传片导演。2015 年郑晓龙导演《芈月传》部分三维特效指导。2014 年豆瓣阿比鹿音乐及宝马汽车宣传片导演。2013 年丹尼·高顿导演《非常幸运》特效视觉效果设计及制作。2012 导演三维动画《中央大街》作为水晶石教育学院官网样片。2011 年导演北京科学技术委员会《李约瑟讲故事》科教片。2011 年戴玮导演电影《西藏往事》特效设计及制作。2010 年周星驰导演电影《长江七号爱地球》后期制作。2003 年至 2007 年期间参与多部三维动画、电影、广告后期制作。2002 年至 2003 年冯小刚导演《手机》三维特效制作。具有丰富的影视从业经历及教学经验。先后外聘于中央民族大学, 北京印刷学院, 北京电影学院担任影视制作及艺术创作任课教师。

刘中会作品简历 灯光设计师

姓 名：刘中会
性 别：男
出生日期：1981 年 9 月
年 龄：岁
户口所在地：河南
政治面貌：
地 址：
电 话：
E-mail: liuzhonghui0914@126.com



·教育背景·

19 /08—19 /06 大学 专业

·个人能力·

在设计界, 灯光设计被称为是体现灵魂设计的手段之一, 一部电影, 一套房子, 一个空间, 一栋建筑, 一条街道, 甚至一个城市, 想要呈现出什么样的主旨, 风格, 深度, 感情, 色彩及氛围, 均可以通过光来定义!

·学习经历·

1999 年从事影视灯光工作, 师从著名灯光大师张树东老师和纪建民老师。

·工作经历以及获得荣誉·

自 1999 年进入影视制作行业后，参与拍摄了众多电影电视剧以及广告片的制作，并且在 2008 年参与了奥运会主场馆灯光照明工程；2009 年在天安门广场参与国庆 60 周年大型文艺晚会照明工程，获得由中共中央政治局委员、北京市市委书记刘淇、北京市市长郭金龙特与颁发的【国庆 60 周年贡献奖荣誉证书】。

·参与拍摄的电影·

2000 年拍摄电影《法官妈妈》，导演：穆德远。获第 25 届金鸡百花奖：最佳导演提名、最佳故事片、最佳摄影。
2002 年参与拍摄电影《英雄》，导演：张艺谋。
2003 年参与拍摄电影《孔雀》，导演：顾长卫。获第 55 届柏林电影节银熊奖—评委会大奖。
2004 年参与拍摄电影《十面埋伏》，导演：张艺谋。
2005 年参与拍摄电影《伯爵夫人》，导演：詹姆斯·艾沃里。
2007 年拍摄的电影《幸福的兔子》，导演：海涛、向灼。
2008 年拍摄数字电影《一个农民的 1978—2008》，导演：刘春彦、曲艺。
2010 年拍摄电影《听说爱情来过》，导演：龚海涛。
2010 年拍摄数字电影《国医》，导演：赵宁宇。
2010 年拍摄电影《生死密电》，导演：毛小睿。
2011 年拍摄电影《永在》，导演：毛小睿。
2011 年拍摄电影《沉默往事》，导演：周俞鹏。
2012 年拍摄电影《山不转水转》，导演：孙宏建。
2013 年拍摄电影《最美教师张丽莉》，导演：刘纾娟。
2013 年拍摄电影《五彩神剑》，导演：万马才旦。
2014 年拍摄数字电影《红色摇篮》导演：张凯。
2014 年参与拍摄电影《鬼吹灯之惊绝古城》，导演：陆川。
2015 年拍摄电影《都市绘》，导演：吴放。

·参与拍摄的电视剧·

《康熙微服私访记》
《纪晓岚》
《十月怀胎》
《活着真好》
《麻辣冤家》
《卧底》
《断奶》
《小爸妈》
《女人的秘密》等。

·参与拍摄的广告片·

曾担任耐克运动系列产品、阿迪达斯运动系列产品、可口可乐、百事可乐、中国移动、中国联通、361 度、上海大众系列、奇瑞汽车、王老吉、康师傅系列品、联想电脑、TCL 手机、蒙牛系列产品、伊利系列产品、五粮液、大宝、七匹狼、麦当劳 肯德基、摩托罗拉、诺基亚.....等众多系列广告片的灯光创作。

·参与拍摄的 MV·

周杰伦、SHE、杨坤、许巍、花儿乐队、羽泉、韩红、胡彦斌、潘玮柏、林俊杰、金沙、莫文蔚.....等 MV 的灯光创作

·自我评价·

在长期的影视制作工作中，积累了深厚的工作经验。



Yan Wu (Professor, Ph.D.)

Dr. Wu is a leading Chinese scholar in Science Fiction research and a professor at the School of Chinese Language and Literature at Beijing Normal University. He is a veteran science fiction author with two novels, *Exploring the Deep Soul* (novel, 1994) and *In the Sixth Day-Life or Death* (novel, 1996) as well as anthologies like *Exodus* (anthology, 2003), *Mouse Pad* (anthology, 2012). His academic work includes *Introduction of Science Fiction* (2006), *Theories and Frameworks of Science Fiction Studies* (2008), *Critical Outlines of Science Fiction* (2011), *Six lectures on Science Fiction* (2013), and *(Re)imagining the World-Children's Literature Response to Changing Times* (2013). Now, he is the head of the Shanghai Wu Yan Culture Media Studio. The mission of this studio is to participant in Chinese science fiction film production.

Contact: wuyan98@hotmail.com; 185-1059-8068

**Haoyue Zhang(张浩月)**

Currently a PhD. Candidate at Southern Illinois University in the United States, majoring in film theory and studies, with focus on contemporary Chinese films. She has a wide range of media working experience, such as working in China Film Group Cooperation as an importation manager for eight years, moonlighting at Beijing Television Station as a script writer and director of live TV for two years, teaching film classes and organizing film festivals in the United States for six years. Thanks to these experiences, she has comprehensive knowledge of both Chinese and American film markets, governmental regulations, script writing and cultural consultation.

So far, she has co-written two award-winning film scripts: *Bad Boy's Summer*, an experimental youth film that went into 2005 Beijing College Students Film Festival (Director Wang Run) and a short romantic narrative, *I Am Nowhere* (Director Evan Kimball), which got into Detroit and Los Angeles international film festivals.

Bio Highlights:**影片进口与营销业务主管:**

在中影集团公司进出口分公司工作期间，最成功的案例为独自负责《星战前传3》全球同步上映的所有引进、审查、合同签订和初期营销策划。

定期参加国际电影节为中国电影市场选片、与电影发行商与制片人接洽。

影视制作人:

身若浮萍 (*I am Nowhere* 剧情短片，青春和北漂题材) 联合编剧和导演，目前入围底特律国际城市电影节和洛杉矶电影艺术国际电影节

看海的七月 (剧情长片，青春和校园题材) 联合编剧

“谁在说” (北京八台名人访谈节目，负责每月制作一期) 编导播

中西文化咨询:

在北京师范大学和北京印刷学院做过若干关于美国电影的现场演讲。

在美国期间在八个学术会议上做过关于中国电影市场和影片分析的现场演讲。

专业笔译/口译:

从全国公映影片的字幕译制 (如《星战前传3》《纳尼亚传奇》《艺妓回忆录》《喜莲》等)、影片拍摄现场的口译、到学术书籍的笔译 (如上海少儿社的《你只年轻两回》)。

E-mail: haoyuebj@qq.com

Phone: 156-1127-8776

Problems and Solutions

For such a short film there are many technically difficult effects to be pulled off. We will need Ming to transform into a robot, Yao Nan to fall down the stairs and be dissected, and real explosions. The director has worked a lot with practical effects and would prefer to do as much as possible to use them instead of digital, 3-D animation. However, there are strong limitations to what can be done on a reasonable budget, so he has brought Zhao Shan Shan onto the project, an experienced 3-D animator and fellow teacher at Beijing Film Academy. With his help, 3-D models of the actors head will be drawn up and rendered into After Effects. On set, we will use practical makeup to surround the area where Ming's face will be damaged, and then a green patch of make-up will be applied as a market for animation of his robotic self underneath to be placed. All the effects in this film will be approached with a combination of practical and digital technique. We will use a real explosion for a more realistic effect and combine it with green screen footage of the actor dodging away. The same can be done for Yao Nan's falling down the stairs.

Another major area of concern is the acting is very demanding, and if non-professional actors are used the film will simply not work. Therefore, the majority of the budget will be devoted to finding the best actors possible. This will cost about 20k, including the price for practice, food, and transportation.

Another area of concern is that the director is a non-native Chinese and his speaking skill will not be fluent enough. His cultural perceptions and lack of Chinese language proficiency greatly endangers the actors ability to perform at peak levels. To help facilitate the actors and overcome this issue, an experiences 1st Assistant Director will be brought on with the exclusive job of coaching actors.

The last area of concern is legal issues with location. We would like to shoot in a real location because the long stair case will not be easy to build on a set and would cost us a lot of money to do so. Therefore, we need a location permit and the ability to inform neighbors about the film and what is going on so they won't contact the police about a murder. We potentially will need to pay legal fees and have a location manager for one day of shooting.



Budget

This is a rough budget with out the 10% contingency added yet. As more equipment and crew is gathered we can flesh it out more.

			Budget	
	Day Rate	Days/Num.	Notes	Total
			Actors演员	
Ming	2250	3		6750
Yao Nan	0	0		0
			Lights灯光	
C-stand	10	24		240
Diva Light	200	6		1200
Cutter	10	24		240
Diffuser	100	20		2000
Kino Kit	200	3		600
Arri 650	50	9		450
Arri 300	40	9		360
2k lantern	200	3		600
	10	45		450
			Camera摄像器材	
Monitor	200	3		600
Tripod Sahltler	100	3		300
Split Dioptre	100	3		300
			Prac. Effects特效化妆	
Assistant	1000	2		3000
Props Man	2000	1		3000
Make up artist	2000	1		3000
Blood	500	1		500
Exploding Shrapnel	500	1		500
Nan's Arm	500	1	Simple cut	500
Wig	50	1	Pillows and wig sown up	50
Ming's Face (dangle&cut)	5000	1	Both cut and shrapnel wound w/ green screen	5000
Nan's Belly	500	1	A pregnant belly wrap to wear all the time	500
Fetus	4000	0.5		2000
Safely Glass Props	50	1	Glass shard to cut with, but isn't sharp	50
			Digi Effects电脑特技	
Digital Animator	5000	1		5000
Green screen	100	1		100
			Wardrobe 服装道具	
Dress	250	2		500
Bloodied T-shirt	60	1		60
Male Wardrobe	250	1		250
			Logistics物流交通	
Van	500	2		1000
Taxis Reimburse	200	5		1000
			Food 饮食	
Food	700	3	30/person for 3 meals	2100
			Crew剧组	
DP摄影	1500	3		4500
CA摄影助理	500	3		1500
Sound	500	3		1500
Set Designer	0	1		0
Gaffer	0	3		0
Gaffer Assistant	300	3		900
			Set Props	
Misc.	500	1		500

5690

18100

	Grand Total
	51100
Padding	5110
Total Projection	56210

Shooting Schedule

Within will take 4 days to complete. 2 days of shooting, one day of practice and setting up, and 2 half-days for transportation of equipment.

The projected day of shooting will be from April 2nd and 3rd, Qing Ming holiday.

Script

Int. Yao Nan's Apartment-Dream- day.

This is a nightmare world. All shimmers with a surreal clarity. A general softness caresses the edges of all things, making them unclear.

Yao Nan, (32), is dressed in an all-white, billowing cotton dress and tall, black heels. She wears a lot of make up, accentuating her already perfect face. She finishes putting on a pair of pearl earrings.

Ming, (43), is dressed in simple, dark clothes, and slippers; he stands behind her, fretfully watching.

MING

Whose going to be there?

YAO NAN

I told you, it's a New Year gathering with our partners.

MIng

...And why do you have to dress so nice if it's just work?

YAO NAN

It's important for me, to look my best.

MING

We are newly weds, make an exception; stay.

Yao Nan playfully pouts.

YAO NAN

I'm coming back early.

Ming gets up and puts his arms around her, he whispers in her ear.

MING (Whisper)

You can stay with me, we can have a date.

She turns to him, showing off her full, pouting lips and gives him a kiss, leaving red lipstick on his cheek.

YAO NAN (CONTD)

This color looks good on you.

MING

What color?

Ming looks in the mirror, and quickly wipes it away.

YAO NAN

Can you tell?

Yao Nan pulls her baggy dress back, revealing her round, 4-month along pregnant belly.

She lets go, the voluminous dress enfolding her belly again. Ming frowns.

MING

Tell what? It's shameful to hide your pregnancy just so you can go to work!

YAO NAN

(Quotes a Mao propaganda poster)

Woman can shoulder up half of the sky!

Ming suddenly becomes irate, shouting at her.

MING

I make enough for both of us! I don't want you to go!

Yao Nan grabs her bag and rushes out.

YAO NAN

Ta ta.

We hear the door lock shut.

Ming looks at himself in the mirror, studying his red tinged face.

He breathes deep and after a few breaths he calms down.

Ming rushes to a cabinet and pulls out a suitcase.

He gently sets it down and opens it. From which he pulls out 3 gifts, all wrapped in different paper.

Ming carefully arranges these gifts on the table, with a basket of fruit, a bottle of champagne, and candles.

He then runs around cleaning up the place.

He takes a set of dirty dishes into the kitchen.

int. Yao Nan's Kitchen- dream- day.

Ming does dishes, washing them carefully and setting them to dry.

He picks up a greasy pan and flips on the propane water heater near by.

The heater begins to hiss, and the lighter fails to spark, it just clicks away.

The gas builds up and *BOOM.* The heater explodes, sending shrapnel out from it's side, into Ming's face.

Ming falls to the ground.

We can hear gas hissing from the broken pipe. Ming stands up and shuts off the gas valve. He has blood splattered all over his shirt. His face, near the jaw, has torn up flaps of skin dangling down. His eyes are wide in panic.

He looks at the destroyed heater box, then down at his bloody shirt.

Int. Yao Nan's Bathroom Dream- day.

Ming washes his face, the blood tinged water clears away quickly. He looks into the mirror and gasps.

The flesh around his jaw is torn up like paper, it dangles loose; beneath the torn skin are metal plates and circuit boards. He pokes the loose pieces of skin, revealing more of the metal, but he reacts painlessly.

Ming studies himself, horrified by this revelation.

A few beats.

Cut to:

INT. Yao Nan's Apartment- Dream-Night.

This part of the nightmare is dark, all things have sharp corners- harsh and dangerous.

The apartment's lights are off, occasionally a firework booms from outside, its light flashing in the apartment in eerie bursts of green, red, and yellow.

Ming hides in the dark back corner of the apartment.

The door unlocks and in comes Yao Nan.

YAO NAN

Ming? Are you home?

Yao Nan flips the lights on, and sees his display

of presents in back.

YAO NAN (CONTD)

Oh wow! What a surprise?

Yao Nan goes over to the gifts and picks them up, as if weighting them for content. She maintains an embellished smile.

She looks around nervously.

YAO NAN (CONTD)

Ming?

Ming says in a twisted, confused manner from the back.

MING

Did you know?

Yao Nan sees him hiding in the back of the room.

YAO NAN

What?

In the background the fireworks explode, adding another layer of tension.

MING

You've known, haven't you? You knew this whole time.

YAO NAN

Knew what?

Ming steps forward, covering the hurt side of his face with his hand. He keeps his face turned away from Yao Nan.

Yao Nan looks at Ming, she gasps.

YAO NAN (Cont'd)

Your shirt is covered in blood?!

MING

There was an explosion in the kitchen.

YAO NAN

Ming? We need to go to the hospital.

MING

I found out that, underneath... my skin...

Yao Nan runs over to Ming and gently pulls his hand down. His face is back to normal. Yao Nan puts her hand gently on Ming's cheek.

YAO NAN

Where are you hurt?

Ming stares into her eyes. He gently places his hand on her cheek. He strokes it, testing it's reality.

Yao Nan takes his hand to make him stop.

Yao Nan

Ming? What's wrong?

Ming seems to be looking at Yao Nan, but past her at the same time, lost in some kind of maddening thought. Yao Nan gives him an anxious look.

YAO NAN (Cont'd)

You must be in shock? How bad was it?

Yao Nan rushes past Ming and looks into the kitchen.

YAO NAN

Oh my god!?

Ming comes up behind Yao Nan and looks over her shoulder.

YAO NAN (CONT'D)

Where are you hurt?

MING

I can't be hurt.

YAO NAN

Ming, listen. You must go to the hospital with me, now!

Yao Nan takes Ming's arm and tries to pull him out of the kitchen. He wrestles away.

Ming goes into the kitchen and picks up a knife from the counter.

MING

Here, I'll show you.

Ming slices his cheek, blood oozes out.

Yao Nan yells.

Ming (Cont'd)

See, I don't feel. I know now, that, I'm not real. All of this, is not real.

Yao Nan desperately tries to speak, but her words are caught in her throat.

YAO NAN (Muttered)

Stop.

MING

I've been thinking, since you left about what this means. I want to show you.

Ming approaches Yao Nan with the knife out, she turns to run and yells in horror.

MING

Shhh...

Yao Nan runs out of the apartment, Ming following close behind.

INT. Yao Nan's Apartment Hallway- Dream- Night.

Ming chases her and grabs her arm again. Yao Nan is on top of an inconceivably long stair case, Ming holds her in balance on top: she pushes away to run, he pulls her in, knife poised.

YAO NAN

No Ming, no! Our baby, don't do this, you're mad! Don't.

MING

Our baby?

He laughs.

MING (CONT'D)

Now you care?

YAO NAN

Of course.

Ming looks away in confusion for a beat.

He tightens his grip on her arm and raises the knife. He then makes a long cut on her exposed arm.

She screeches in pain, her screams mixing with the crackling of fireworks

In shock, Ming lets go of Yao Nan, who stumbles back.

MING (mumbled, Whisper)

But...how could it...

Yao Nan's high heels give her no footing, and she falls head first into the stairs below.

At the bottom she lies in shadow, an inky dark blood all around her. From the flashes of fireworks we see her body is twisted and broken.

Ming comes down the stairs with the knife and stoops over her.

He sobs deeply.

MING

No...no...no.

He studies her a bit, sobbing.

With the knife he begins to cut and hack away.

First her face.

He looks for something, but doesn't find it.

So he slices here and there, revealing more blood.

He comes to her abdomen, and begins gouging in a

sickening, inhuman way.

He stops, and puts his hand deep inside her guts,
and pulls something out.

With a smile of satisfaction he runs up the stairs.

int. Yao Nan's Kitchen- dream-Night.

Ming washes something off in the sink, the blood
spiraling down the drain.

Once clean, he examines a cracker sized, mechanical
fetus that has wires running out of it.

He smiles joyfully in relief.